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# Met Office keeps airlines moving

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The Met Office helped keep airlines on time and their costs to a minimum last month. It correctly forecast airframe icing on 98% of occasions on over 200 incidents of icing at 14 airfields around the UK.

December 2008 saw the coldest start to winter since 1996 with frost on half of the days in the month. However, the month wasn't just dry and frosty, there were a number of nights where cloud cover and showers made the timing and severity of the icing events harder to forecast.

Unsettled wintry weather this week has brought more showers and freezing temperatures, and the Met Office expects the risk of airframe icing to continue throughout the rest of the winter.

By alerting airlines to the weather hazards affecting their departure times, Met Office Aircraft De-icing Forecasts have been proven to reduce de-icing delays by up to 85% and de-icing costs by up to 30%. They also help airlines lower their environmental impact by cutting the usage and wastage of de-icing fluid.

The service uses unrivalled site-specific forecasts to warn up to five days in advance of when de-icing of aircraft on the ground is required. The 24-hour forecast then makes decision making easy; detailed forecasts and holdover times are available on line, while e-mail, text and fax alerts can be delivered direct to ground staff. Round-the-clock telephone consultancy is also available from Met Office aviation forecasters, giving expert advice on the current situation.